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### The Mission of Mozart.

LEADING CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS GENIUS AND  
HIS WORKS.

BY A. OULIBICHEFF.

(Continued from p. 138.)

No one doubts that works of genius, truly original works, reflect the image of their authors. In the main features of a prominent artist's manner, you recognize the peculiarities of his soul, the sort of impressions to which he principally yields himself, and frequently even traces of his external fortune. The greater the influence commonly, which an artist has exercised upon the taste of his age and upon the general direction of Art, the more is this individual impression visible in himself. We need no other proof of it, than that depicted with astonishing fidelity in the works of the two men, who mark, each in his way, the present musical epoch: BEETHOVEN and ROSSINI—what extremes, in good as well as bad, express themselves in these two names! Rossini, the spoiled child of his century, exuberant with health and strength, a fine-looking man, if we may trust the portraits which exist of him, upon whom fortune smiled on all sides, as his biographers assure us, lively and sparkling and volatile as champagne, fond of journeys, upon which he reaped golden laurels, that grew up under his melodious footsteps; an artist, who knew no other gods, besides success, enjoyment and money. Turn now and look upon the other musician, who remains his life long confined to one spot, where he seems to have taken root and sadly vegetated, like a sick plant; without family and almost without home environment; excluded from the world by an infirmity, which, like no

other, stands in the way of sociality, to-wit total deafness; a youth, who had never had a love affair; a hypochondriac, whose soul, more like a prisoner than a dweller in a body weighed to earth by sufferings, penetrated, by the might of an exalted genius, into the mysteries of future existence, which were revealed to him in music; the most melancholy of men, who under an icy rind concealed the warmest heart and noblest qualities; a stoic upon system and a morose philanthropist upon principle.\* The personalities of Beethoven and Rossini are most purely mirrored in their works. You see them, you know them, you are their most intimate and confidential companion on their life journey, while you hear them.

We comprehend these two men and musicians, who on both sides were so completely harmonious with themselves. But what do we find, if we study MOZART's character from facts and traditions? We find such a character as would seem to have proceeded from a series of psychological deductions drawn from the fabulous works of the musician; an individuality quite as fabulous; the gift of a rich fantasy, which stood ever ready at his bidding, by means of which he was enabled to give the key to a riddle, which otherwise had had none. Easily excitable senses and a philosophic mind; a heart overflowing with tenderness and a head wonderfully well organized for calculation; on the one side a propensity to pleasurable indulgence, a multitude of various fondnesses and inclinations, which characterize a sanguine temperament; on the other side that obstinate persistency in labor, that tyranny of one exclusive passion, that life-consuming excess of intellectual toil, which are the attributes of melancholy temperaments; all day long whirled away in the vortex in which he lived, and spending the night over his lamp, which the demon of inspiration held lit till the purple break of dawn; by turns overstrained and passive, hypochondriacal and droll, a devout Catholic and a merry boon companion—such essentially was Mozart, the inexplicable man, because he was the universal musician, who applied himself to his art with an energy of will amounting to self-sacrifice, while in all else he showed himself a living contradiction, weakness personified. What shall we make of such a character, and how reduce it to a unity? Where shall we discover a predominating trait, when all extremes predominate? Attempt to sketch the outline of the moral individual, with lines which cross each other as if perpendicularly! Yet only with such an extraordinary character was it possible for one man to produce *Don Juan* and the *Requiem*. Thus we

\* So his biographers describe him.

perceive, that in the history of Mozart all is logical, precisely because all is wonderful.

The time, in which our hero came into the world, the place of his birth, the education he received, his father, his travels seem to us in this way above all as shapings of providence, which prepared his mission, determined its nature, and with infallible foresight made its fulfilment sure.

Like the literary renaissance, of which our time was witness, so the musical renaissance made itself complete by a returning to the past. It lay in the spirit of the eighteenth century to despise the Middle Age and its creations, which were generally branded with the epithet Gothic or barbaric. But since Music is some thousand years younger than the other arts, its middle age began with the fifteenth century and ended with the seventeenth. All the celebrities of that age therefore lay forgotten under the dust of libraries, at the time of the appearance of Mozart's first masterwork, *Idomeneo*. BACH and even HANDEL had become almost Gothic; they were neither known in Italy nor France; in Germany they were almost forgotten, and England only cherished an enthusiasm for Handel, which had become an heir-loom or tradition, and was founded more upon his title as national composer, than upon the merit of his works. Yet, as we have already said, there is no universal scientific, artistic or literary striving, which, unprofitable as it may be for the present, can remain entirely unproductive for the future. PALESTRINA and some of his contemporaries had restored its rights to the Choral song; BACH had justified the Flemish school; the Italian masters of the eighteenth century, and above all GLUCK, had brought MONTEVERDE's *speaking music* into honor, which was far more tasteless than the old Choral song and Canon. So likewise what surprises us and first of all must occupy us in appreciating the style of Mozart, the great innovator, lies in his partial return to the forms and spirit of the music of the middle age, commenced by JOSQUIN, who represents the earliest effort. Not only does the canonical form re-appear in the chief masterworks of Mozart, and predominate there more or less; but he delights in reproducing the most subtle difficulties of the style, which the composers since Bach had abandoned to the theorists, and which were commonly regarded as mere difficult stupidities. We glance, for example, at that most learned violin quartet of his, which is called "the Fugue", and we remark among other combinations, worthy of a Josquin or a Bach, the subject, which is heard simultaneously, note for note, both in its original form and *al riverso*, (reversed):



The second musician, who makes an epoch in the annals of the Art, and with whom, according to our view, real music takes its origin, is PALESTRINA, whose *Stabat Mater* and *Impropria* he had heard performed in Rome during the Carnival week, and which he doubtless had already studied. Long banished from the secular music and the fugue, Palestrina's modulation still lived on in the Choral; but it had not preserved its old simplicity therein, and Bach, as well as Vogler, an emendator\*, in that he undertook to substitute the Greek modes as a basis, sought by artificial harmony, and a choice of chords entirely unknown to Palestrina, to reduce it to the modern keys. But Mozart, who better than any other knew the power and majesty of the progression by trichords, did not hesitate to introduce it in profane music and even in the opera, with the changes necessary to render it less hard and more correct. He approached the harmony of the sixteenth century with far less constraint than Bach and Vogler, and without giving it out for Greek music, he understood how to produce effects from this bold innovation, of which the reader may judge from the sublime and universally known example, which I here place before his eyes:

Don Gio - van - ni a ce - nar

te - co m'in - vi - tas - ti

e son vo - nu - to.

Here we have a succession of Trichords, without any modal connecting links, extending to the seventh chord: a harmony entirely in the style of Palestrina.

[To be continued.]

IL TROVATORE.—From the *California Pioneer*, a magazine in which we almost always find something entertaining, we copy the following amusing description of an operatic performance in the city of Swineville:—

Last night, our citizens were regaled with that

\*Vogler presumed to improve Bach's harmony, by making it Grecian.

chef d'œuvre of the lyric drama, "The Burnt Child, or the Harmonious Blacksmith," by Mr. Verdi. The libretto was written by the poet Dante (whose works are now publishing in this place by subscription), assisted by his two daughters, Ann and Mercia Dante. The leading characters are sustained by Mrs. Westvalley, Signor Stromboli, and Signor Badyeller, with others whose names we have not yet learned to pronounce. The orchestra is better than our own band, which consists of seven accordions and a base flute. We had a large and brilliant house, newly shingled for the occasion; and all the accessories were perfect, including the public lorgnette, which was one of Dolland's best night glasses, arranged upon a stand in the middle of the house, so that the audience could look through it in rotation, merely by going up a short ladder. We will give in a few words the outline of the plot:—It seems there had been an old grudge between Mrs. Stromboli and Mrs. Westvalley, about a preserving kettle which the former had borrowed of the latter and returned badly fractured. Mrs. Westvalley being of a hasty, passionate disposition, immediately caught up Mrs. Stromboli's child (as she thought) and threw him into the fire, which, being of large hickory logs, and very hot, consumed him before she had time to reflect. She discovered afterwards that it was her own child she had destroyed, and felt really sorry; so by way of atonement, being really a good-hearted woman, she took another child who happened to be in the house, and brought him up like a good mother, as she was; mended his stockings, sent him to school, and tipped him regularly once a quarter.

All this amiable story was only by way of introduction, and in the first act two bellicose individuals appear, with an extensive plume apiece, and most truculent raiment, each of whom reveals to a large and discriminating audience, in the presence of the other, the secret of his love for the prima donna, a practice which in private life would cause some bitterness of feeling, but which, upon the stage, only tends to additional harmony. It is doubtful for some time which of these feathered songsters will prevail, but finally the barytone (Count Moon) gets the better of the tenore, in spite of his tin helmet, and he is carried off to prison. Mrs. Westvalley, for some inscrutable reason, is put into irons and sent off somewhere into the wings, by a large and efficient singing police force, also in tin helmets. Then comes in the prima donna (Leonora) who seems to have a great deal to say, though nobody knows where she came from or who she belongs to. She appears to be a very unhappy young woman, alternating some time between difficult solos and still more difficult pedestrian feats, and finally going off into a "cadulcion," after what appears to be a frantic attempt to climb into the second story window of somebody's private residence, and the curtain goes down upon the dreary scene. The plot is somewhat obscure thus far, but it is beautifully cleared up in the second act, by the appearance of several blacksmiths judiciously clad in armor, who, assisted by the orchestra, commence vigorously hammering upon their respective anvils, but without the intervening piece of hot iron generally used upon such occasions, whereat the Swinevilleans marvelled greatly. After this grand mechanical display they all disappeared, but soon rushed in again armed with swords; and not having their temper sweetened and subdued by the chastening influence of Christianity, they immediately commenced a free fight. It suddenly occurred to them, however, to sing a trio and chorus, which had such a moving effect that they all vanished, forgetting all about the "scrimmage," thus proving conclusively the power of music upon the savage breast. In the next place Count Moon enters, and barytoniously bewails, until Mrs. Westvalley comes in and kindly informs him, by means of severe vocalization and some help from the orchestra, that his rival, whom he has just hanged, is his own brother, and the identical child who so narrowly escaped roasting in the prologue. His emotion at these pleasant tidings is "right smart," and he is obliged to titillate his nose with a lace pocket handkerchief, take several manly

strides, and sing a song of considerable length before he can compose himself. Then she takes her turn, and goes off into a paroxysm; but she soon finds that violent gesticulation will not do, because the shackles are too large for her wrists, and she is afraid her irons will drop off, so she subsides into such a magnificent solo that we are all compelled to cry bravo, regardless of gender. Captain Cognosco, the chief of our dilettanti, who was just out of peanuts, commenced applauding in the middle of a shake, and could only be induced to desist when she had finished her cadenza. About this time they all settle away upon the stage with more or less violence, and expire, one after the other, in the flower of their youth, leaving the audience much affected at their untimely fate, although they are nothing but foreigners. We suppose for an instant that they all died like Lord Lovel, of pure sorrow, but are speedily enlightened by a couple of arpeggios from the fiddles, one of which clearly but concisely informs us, that the female party has just poisoned herself with ratsbane, and the other explains that the male party have all punctured the aorta. Notwithstanding they are all dead, very dead, we persist in calling them out, and they have a sort of apotheosis, with the aid of holyhocks and spring onions, and we all go home refreshed and contented.

Where all was so perfect it would be invidious to particularize, but we cannot refrain from commending Mrs. Westvalley, for the foreshortening of her left arm in the grand quintette between herself and Stromboli in the second act. The chorus also deserve great credit for the admirable precision of their gestures, first with the right hand, then with the left. There was a brilliant effect produced by one of the heavy hammers, which came off the handle and rattled upon the feet of the scaly-breeched warriors, causing some unexpected gyrations. We must not overlook some faults, the effect of a too hasty preparation. Capt. Cognosco remarked that Mrs. Westvalley looked badly about the fetlocks, and had the effect generally of not being well groomed; and the voice of the prima donna, whose name we have forgotten, was a little husky, which, we learn, was caused by eating too much coarse corn bread for supper. Mrs. Westvalley's voice is *mezzo allegretto*, of great power and brilliancy, though somewhat shaky in the *da capo* notes. We also noticed a muffled tone, which was caused by her wearing a night cap on the stage. Signor Badyeller is a robust barytone, of great power and pre-eminence, whose only faults are those of youth and inexperience. He is only sixty-five, and will improve as he grows older. Signor Stromboli was most excellent in the vocal passages, though his singing was decidedly bad. The orchestra was perfect as a whole; but we think the instrumental parts had better be omitted. The brass was metallic, and there was an unpleasant toughness about the strings. We also noticed a reedy tone in one of the clarionettes. To conclude, we fully agree with Captain Cognosco, that as a whole it has never been equalled, and only surpassed by Ossian's Bards and New England Warblers.

Critics differ in their estimate of Mr. Verdi, as a composer; for our own part, we incline to the opinion that his style has a great many beauties and an equal number of defects. The *tout ensemble* of his compositions is remarkably fine, though the effect altogether is a decided failure. He has a great majesty of rhythm, with an easy and graceful flow of *staccato*, and his monotonies are full of brilliant and fanciful variety. His *sostenuto* passages are also much admired for their brevity, and some of his minor chords have a very bold and martial character. On the other hand, he has been accused of introducing too much rigmarole. His style is full of abrupt and startling transitions; for instance, where the chorus leave off blacksmithing and go to fighting and singing at the same time; and his recitative is at times deficient in pathos. The intervals between the acts are too long, and some of his finest passages are liable to be forgotten. His *crescendo* sometimes degenerates into a mere swell, and his *diminuendo* has been very justly accused of taper-



ing.— Tomorrow night we are to have Hogarth's grand opera of "Cantharides," and the first act of "Nebuchadnezzar don't know, sir," in which will be introduced the popular Scotch song of "Erin go Braugh."

### How they manage refractory Singers in Mexico.

[From "Crochets and Quavers," by MAX MARETZKE.]

As another instance of Mexican law and Mexican justice, I may mention, that as often as a vocalist got really, or imaginarily, or wilfully sick, and necessitated a change in the performance which had been announced for the evening, it was the unfortunate manager who was fined \$100. In vain was it, that I represented to the Governor of the State, and even to the President of the Republic, His Excellency Senor General Arista, that the guilty party was not the manager. In vain did I endeavor to make them understand, that if the artist himself was the party who had to pay the fine, it was more than probable that the artist would manage to avoid getting sick, or at any rate so sick as to necessitate a change of performance after the bills of the evening had been published. The only answer which I received from them, was this—

"That the Representatives and the Senate of the Republic could alone modify or change the laws."

Nevertheless I must exculpate the Republic of Mexico from the charge of treating the artists altogether with an unfair degree of leniency. As a proof of the fact that it does not, allow me, my dear sir, to relate an incident which happened towards the close of the second season's subscription.

Signor Salvi had indulged in some of the usual flirtations (which unindulged in, it would be impossible for an Italian *tenor* to exist) in Mexico. Anxious to display his equestrianism before the eyes of his fair Senora, he purchased a horse, and intended to exhibit himself in all his beauty and glory, astride of it, in the *Paseo*. Unfortunately for me, he had not displayed his equestrianism for more than two hundred yards, when his Bucephalus (a remarkably quiet one, by the by), alarmed by the bright eyes and flirting fan of some passing Senorita, started and reared. Unable to keep his seat, Salvi fell from his steed and managed to break his arm. He was immediately carried home, where the physician who was called in to him declared, that although there was not the slightest danger, it would very certainly be six weeks at the least before he could again appear upon the stage. With this announcement, all my reasonable prospects of continuing my campaign successfully, vanished; for it cannot be denied that Salvi was one of my leading attractions. At all events, I endeavored, as far as was in my power, to remedy this unforeseen misfortune for the time being. The opera announced for the same evening was Donizetti's "La Favorita." As I knew that Forti had frequently sung this part before, and had even requested it of me, as a favor, I went to him and asked him to be kind enough to undertake it.

Knowing it would be utterly impossible for Salvi to appear for several weeks, he believed that his time had arrived. At any rate, he showed his inclination to vault into the throne which had heretofore been occupied by that *tenor*.

Point-blank, he refused to sing upon this evening. His excuse was sickness.

But, as if determined to show me that this was not the actual reason, and, at the same time, to demonstrate that if not a better vocalist, he was at any rate a better rider than his rival (if, indeed, Salvi could be called the rival of any *tenor* who has been in this country, with the solitary exception of Mario), he went on the very same evening, on horseback, to the neighboring village of Tacubaya.

Going immediately to the Governor, I informed him of what had happened. He chanced to be in a good humor, and permitted me to give a miscellaneous concert on that evening, instead of the opera which had been announced, without

paying the customary fine of \$100. In the mean time, four soldiers with a corporal, the usual operative *quota*, were posted at the Gate of Mexico on the road to Tacubaya. Instructions were given them to wait for the return of the willing absentee from his operative duties, and to bring him as soon as he entered the city before the Governor.

The concert took place during his absence, and I am obliged to say that the audience, having heard of Salvi's accident, bore Forti's absence with the most exemplary equanimity.

During the whole night, the non-commissioned officer, with his four men, waited for the refractory *tenor*. At about nine o'clock on the following morning, he returned. He was in fine spirits touching the trick which he had played me, and was humming, as I was afterwards told, one of the very airs from "La Favorita," which he had so decidedly declined singing. As he entered the city, the corporal strode before him.

"You are the Senor Forti?" was the soldier's address to the vocalist, as he laid his hand upon the bridle of his horse.

"Yes! my good fellow, I am."

"Dismount, then."

"But—"

"Dismount!"

"My dear sir, what on earth does this mean?"

"Dismount!"

"Allow me to ask—" commenced the trembling *tenor*.

"Dismount!" repeated the corporal, "or I shall be obliged to make you."

The miserable Forti was compelled to obey the imperative order addressed to him, by a man to whom, twelve hours before, he would not have spoken a single word.

Then, he was placed between two of the soldiers, while the two others led his horse between them.

"*Dios e Libertad!*" said the corporal reverently, but without removing his *shako*, as, in obedience to his orders, they began to march through the streets of Mexico towards the *Deputacion*, as the City Hall is there called.

When arrived there, the *tenor* was immediately carried before the Governor.

What was my astonishment, on learning that without a trial, and even without a hearing, he was condemned to a fortnight's imprisonment.

This order was at once carried into execution. Without giving him time even to change his clothes, permitting him to get clean linen, or to remove the spurs from his boots, he was hurried off to the common jail. Here he was thrust into the society of all the robbers, thieves, *leperos*, and other scoundrels, who had incurred the notice of the Mexican law. Delighted with his company, these respectable gentlemen disburdened him in the first fifteen minutes that he spent amongst them, of his watch and chain, money, rings, spurs, cigar box, pocket handkerchief, riding whip, gloves, and other supernumerary articles, as they conceived, in such an establishment.

Now this was a just visitation, I will not deny, upon Forti.

But you must observe that his punishment fell with double weight upon my shoulders. Salvi, with his broken arm and confined to his bedroom, might reasonably grumble. While Forti in prison, and thrown among such company, was certainly to the full as much to be pitied. But the miserable manager appeared to me to stand in the least enviable situation. He had by far the worst in the matter. They could not sing, while he was unable to give opera. Their only answer was required by him, personally. His excuse must be given too, as it was demanded by his subscribers.

Of course, we all visited the unfortunate Forti, bearing with us tokens of affection as well as of pity and condolence.

One bore him a box of fragrant Havanas. Another contributed a cold roast turkey to his creature comforts. This one carried him a bottle of brandy, and that one sent him a half dozen of champagne. But, ere our interview with him had terminated, these had all vanished. His as-

sociates in the interior of the prison laughed at the sympathy of his friends without the walls. They held the doctrine of a community of property amongst the compulsory inhabitants of that enforced Republic (let me here exclaim "*Dios e Libertad!*") and appropriated to themselves a large proportion of these gifts, as soon as he had received them. Some devoured the turkey, and others drank the champagne. These emptied his bottle of brandy, and those made free with the cigars. Nothing was left of them save the bones, the bottle, and the box. It was in vain that a *Paté de Foie gras* was contributed to the list of his imprisoned enjoyments. They had cleaned it out while his back was turned and he was talking to his benefactor. Uselessly was a cold haunch of mutton sent him. In ten minutes he could only contemplate the dish upon which it had erewhile stood.

Meanwhile, pitying him and myself too, I, the miserable manager, had besieged the Governor with supplications for his release.

With great exertion, the permission for the release of Forti was obtained by me, on such evenings as his performance might be required. On these occasions, he was accompanied by four soldiers, who brought him to the theatre and delivered him into my hands, half an hour or an hour before the opera commenced. At the conclusion, they marched him again off to the jail. Pity for Forti, after this, gained fast upon my feelings. Rehearsals were arranged, which necessitated his presence, and he was kept out of his enforced residence for the whole of the day. However he had still to sleep under lock and key. At length, upon the fifth day, by dint of the most unremitting exertions, I obtained from the President himself the remission of the remainder of his term of imprisonment, or, rather, its commutation into a fine of \$100.

After this, Forti never afterwards missed a performance in Mexico for sickness (!) or any other cause.

### MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS AT BARBERS' SHOPS.

—In the sixteenth century a lute or viol, or some such musical instrument, was part of the furniture of a barber's shop, which was used then to be frequented by persons above the ordinary level of the people, who resorted to the barber either for the cure of wounds, or to undergo some surgical operation, or, as it was then called, to be "trimmed"—a word that signified either shaving or cutting and curling the hair; these, together with letting blood, were the ancient occupations of the barber-surgeon. The setting of fractured limbs was practised by another set of men called "bone-setters." The musical instruments in the barber's shops were for the amusement of waiting customers, and answered the end of the newspaper of the present day.—*Sir John Hawkins.*

### Handel his own Publisher.

The following will be found in the first edition of Handel's well-known *Suites de Pièces pour le Clavecin*:—

"GEORGE R.

"George, by the grace of God, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting: Whereas George Frederick Handel, of our city of London, Gent., hath humbly represented unto Us, that he hath with great Labour and Expense composed several Works, consisting of Vocal and Instrumental Music, in order to be printed and published; and hath therefore besought Us to grant him Our Royal Privilege and Licence for the sole printing and publishing thereof for the Term of Fourteen Years: We being willing to give all due Encouragement to Works of this Nature, are graciously pleased to condescend to his request; and We do therefore by these Presents, so far as may be agreeable to the statute in that behalf made and provided, grant unto him the said George Frederick Handel, his Executors, Administrators, and Assigns, our Licence for the sole Printing and Publishing the said Works for the Term of

Fourteen Years, to be computed from the Date hereof, strictly forbidding all our loving Subjects within our Kingdoms and Dominions, to reprint or abridge the same, either in the like, or any other Volume or Volumes whatsoever, or to Import, Buy, Vend, Utter or Distribute any copies thereof Reprinted beyond the Seas, during the aforesaid term of Fourteen years, without the consent to approbation of the said *George Frederick Handel*, His Heirs, Executors and Assigns, under their Hands & Seals first had & obtained, as they will answer the contrary at their Perils; Whereof the Commissioners & other officers of our Customs, the Master, Wardens & Company of Stationers are to take notice, that due Obedience may be rendered to our pleasure herein declared. GIVEN AT OUR COURT AT St. James's THE 14TH DAY OF June 1720, in the Sixth year of OUR REIGN.

By his Majesty's Command,  
J. CRAGGS."

To the above is added :—

"I have been obliged to publish some of the following lessons because surreptitious and incorrect copies of them had got abroad. I have added several new ones to make the work more useful, which if it meets with a favourable reception, I will still proceed to publish more, reckoning it my duty, with my Small Talent, to serve a Nation from which I have received so Generous a protection.  
G. F. HANDEL."

### Musical Correspondence.

NEW YORK, FEB. 4.—Last Friday a complimentary concert was given to Mr. J. KYLE, the flutist, in acknowledgement of his long artist-activity in our city, by some of the first merchants, artists, literary men, etc.. The programme was curious in quantity as well as quality. It consisted of no less than *seventeen* numbers, which were executed by a variety of resident artists, and consisted of the most miscellaneous styles of music. There was a good attendance, and all admired the beautiful new hall of the City Assembly Rooms, where the concert was given, and which, in point of tastefulness and decoration, as well as acoustic advantages, approaches more nearly to your Music Hall than anything of the kind we have heretofore attempted. All went well, so well that the lengthy programme was still more drawn out by numerous *encores*. The novelty of the evening was the debut (before a New York audience, at least) of Miss ELLEN BRENNAN, a favorite pupil of BADIALLI, who has instructed her for the last two or three years. Very youthful and pleasing in appearance, and gifted with a fresh, fine and flexible voice, the young lady did her teacher much credit in the duet from *Figaro*, which she sang with him, as also Rode's Variations, which called forth an *encore*. Some timidity was observable, particularly in the first piece, but this was natural on the occasion, and is a fault which every re-appearance will remedy. Success to the young artist, who, as we know from good authority, devotes herself to her Art with all truth and earnestness and loves it with her whole heart and soul!

Next Friday, the 15th inst. there is to be a charitable concert, in behalf of the German Ladies' Society for Widows and Orphans, of which I will give you due notice. I mention it beforehand, in the hope of inducing some of your New York readers to attend, if not for the object, still for the entertainment, which will be quite an inducement in itself. Miss BRAINERD, Messrs. WM. MASON, TIMM, FEDER and SCHMITZ, Mr. EISEL and his Quartet party, and the German Liederkreis, have kindly promised their assistance, and the programme will offer various attractions. We hope to see the hall spoken of above well filled on this occasion.

BERLIN, Jan. 14. (From a private letter.) We went to hear Beethoven's *Fidelio*. It is by far the greatest opera, with the exception of *Don Giovanni*, I have ever heard. The music is most exquisite. Frau KÖSTER was the *Fidelio*, and she sang and acted most charmingly. The music is rather high and very difficult to sing; the time of the concerted pieces is particularly difficult, and they were not perfectly well performed. But that splendid orchestra surpassed everything I have heard in the accompaniments throughout. The house was not overflowing, but the audience was intensely enthusiastic.

The opera of *Tannhäuser* is having a great run at present, and we have found it impossible to get tickets at a reasonable sum. Tickets are bought up by speculators; they have charged from four to six dollars for them, and there have been full houses at these prices. I do not think this opera house, although so much larger than the Boston Theatre, will seat any more persons; and the more I look at it critically, the more I think of "the Boston" in comparison.

To-night we went to the Theatre, which we found rather small, somewhere between the Museum and the Boston Theatre, the seats comfortably arranged in the parquet and three galleries, the decorations simple and tasteful, the stage scenery and accessories very complete. The play was Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew," but so clipped and changed, that it was difficult to recognize it. Of course I could not understand half that was said, but the actors were all excellent, and I found a great deal of amusement, particularly in the comic characters; one man's face was so droll that I shall not soon forget it. There was no orchestra, and nothing between the acts upon the stage. As soon as the curtain dropped, the audience stood up and talked, or went out to the refreshment room. Everything was very quiet and orderly—more so than in any theatre I was ever in. The performance commenced at seven, and ended at half-past nine.

On Wednesday, p. m., we all went out as usual to Liebig's Symphony Concert, and enjoyed a splendid programme. First the march in "Midsummer Night's Dream;" then an overture of Beethoven's; the finale to *Don Juan*, including the Minuetto, Trio, Graveyard scene, &c.; then a Symphony by Schubert, and a Symphony in E flat, by Haydn, that was very beautiful. This garden concert brings all the American gentlemen out. One-half the audience at least, are ladies, and they almost all have knitting or embroidery, and work away, nodding their heads to the time of the music, except at intermission, when they drink beer and talk very fast.

Saturday evening, we went to the concert given by the Dom or Cathedral choir, in the Sing-Akademie. It was one of a series of subscription concerts, which, as they are patronized by the king, are of course fashionable. We found it impossible to get seats anywhere but in the gallery, which we liked very much, as the music sounded finely up there, and we had a grand view of the audience, which looked very much like a fashionable audience in New York or Boston, with the exception of the military trappings, which are always glittering in all the public assemblages here. The hall is very tasteful, and admirably constructed for sound in the form of two cubes. The King's box is on one side of the hall, and is really a large room, lighted by chandeliers. He was not present, but the ladies of his household were there, attended by gentlemen in military dress. The choir is composed of thirty men and fifty-six boys. They sang compositions of Palestrina, Scarlatti, the two Bachs, and Franz Schubert. The music of the two first very old authors (two hundred years at least,) sounds very odd and peculiar to a modern amateur, at least an American. But that of Schubert and Nicolai was enchanting. You can hardly conceive of the perfection which this choir

have attained by constant practice of this kind of music. All their voices harmonize so beautifully, that they sound in the loud passages like one great instrument; their *diminuendo* is wonderful. The concert was not long—no entertainment is made so here. People get just enough without being tired out.

### Music Abroad.

London.

By last accounts Mme. JENNY LIND GOLDSCHMIDT was still singing in one or the other of the three great oratorios, "Elijah," the "Creation," and the "Messiah." The *Spectator* places her above CLARA NOVELLO as a Handelian singer, and says:

Jenny Lind's singing in *The Messiah* was the greatest of all her efforts. She rose with the loftiness of her subject, and delivered the inspired language of the musician—grandly interpreting the sacred text—with an inspiration akin to his own. Her distinguishing characteristic has always been, on the stage as well as in the concert-hall, reality, depth, and intensity of feeling. It was this that gave such lofty beauty to her portrait of the self-devoted Alice, and threw such affecting pathos into the sorrows of the heart-broken Amina. Her voice, as a musical instrument, has been equalled; but as an organ of expression, probably never. Its very tones are often full of tears. Its mere sounds thrill upon the heart and rouse sympathetic emotions. It has power, sweetness, volume, flexibility,—qualities possessed by many; but it penetrates the soul as no voice has done that we have ever heard. It penetrates the soul because it is the voice of the soul; it stirs the inmost heart because it is from the inmost heart that it flows.

She produced numberless fresh and unexpected beauties by the expressive utterance of a single word. But her great triumph was in "I know that my Redeemer liveth." It was not mere singing—it was a fervid outpouring of faith, hope, and joy, which it would be vain to endeavor to describe, because we have never anything in music like it or comparable to it. It is perhaps scarcely necessary to add, that her purity of style was as remarkable in this as in her previous performances. She gave the text of Handel without a note of display or ornament; justly conceiving that its best ornament lies in its divine simplicity.

Mme. Goldschmidt has also commenced some concerts of miscellaneous secular music, with programmes similar to her American ones. At the first, given in the Hanover Square Rooms, which was crammed, she sang the prayer from the *Frey-schütz*; the scena from *Beatrice di Tenda*; a selection of four Mazurkas of Chopin, arranged for voice and piano by her husband; "John Anderson," and the Swedish "Echo Song"—as if to represent all styles and suit all tastes. Herr Otto Goldschmidt played on the piano Beethoven's Concerto in G; Mendelssohn's Capriccio in B minor; and a *Sarabande* and *Allegro* from one of Bach's *Suites de Pièces*. Herr Reichardt sang from Mozart's *Seraglio* and from the *Huguenots*, and the orchestra, under Benedict, played the overtures to *Figaro* and to *Medea*.

The Queen entertained her guests at Windsor Castle on New Year's Day with a performance of Mehul's sacred drama of "Joseph." A new English version of the text had been written by Mr. Bartholomew. The performance was conducted by Mr. Anderson, director of the Queen's private band. The principal characters were sustained by Clara Novello, Sims Reeves, Weiss, Benson, &c. &c., with a chorus and orchestra 140 strong. Several classical works have in the same way been first made known in England under the auspices of the Queen and Prince Albert; for instance, the *Edipus* and the *Athalie* of Mendelssohn.

The oratorios "Elijah" and the "Creation" were last month performed by the Sacred Harmonic Society (with Clara Novello, Miss Dolby, Sims Reeves, &c.) Costa should have conducted, but was ill, and M. Sainton took his place—"St. Paul" was given on the 16th by Mr. John Hullah; principal singers, Mme. Weiss, Miss Primer, Sims Reeves, Buckland and Weiss.

The Piano-Forte Concerts of Mr. W. H. Holmes,



assisted by his professional pupils, offer quite a novel programme, to wit:

The following works will be performed, many new to this country, and others rarely performed:—Concertos: Benedict's, in A flat; Otto Goldschmidt's, in B flat; Schumann's in A minor; Ries, in A flat; Steibelt's Mount St. Bernard; Reinecke's in G minor, Herz's 4th in E; concert pieces in G and D minor, Schumann; Sonatas in E, J. W. Davison; A minor, G. A. Macfarren; "Florestan and Eusebius," and F sharp minor, Schumann; F sharp minor, Brahms; E minor, Rubenstein, &c.; "Whispering Music" "Fairy Fingers," "Midnight Reverie," concerto "Consuelo," W. H. Holmes; 3rd concerto sinfonia, Litolf, &c.

BERLIN.—*Tannhäuser*, after several years of fruitless negotiation, has at last found entrance to this operatic capital of Germany. It was performed there for the first time on the 7th ult., and tickets sold by speculators at \$4 to \$6. Has the Barnumbian epidemic broken out in Berlin? At all events we understand that not a little intrigue and "high pressure" has been used there to get up this un-German sort of excitement about Wagner's work.—Those who would know how this "Art-work of the future" seemed in the greatest German theatre, may form some idea, (perhaps one-sided), from parts of a criticism in the *Süd-Deutsche Musik-Zeitung*, which we translate:

"The effect as a whole was not convincing; indeed it did not equal my expectation. For the preparations were more formidable than would be possible in any other place; the caste was the strongest to be found, and within a few years the number of musicians of the future has greatly increased in Berlin; there were at least a hundred of them, all resolved to take hold of the work with all their strength. The outfit was pompous, not to say lavish; it must have cost \$30,000. The decorations were so artistically beautiful and historically true, that it was worth while to go to the opera for them alone.

"This very exhaustive use of outward means, unless I err, serves only to put the work more in the shade. The works of our classical masters have taught us that what is truly beautiful and deep and great will even in modest representations reveal the inextinguishable traces, and grows infinitely as the representation becomes more complete. Not so the music of Wagner and his friends. For this there are two stumbling blocks; to-wit, with small means the impossibility, and with large means the overdoing of performance. The new direction (school) always insists on having its ideas embodied on the greatest possible scale, and charges all its failures to theatres of the second or third rank. Berlin has set all doubts at rest on this point, but not to the satisfaction of the Wagnerites.

"Hence it always seemed to me a vain fear, which sought to close the way to Berlin against *Tannhäuser*. Had it been given here for a year and a day, together with the *Holländer* and *Lohengrin*, and even letting Liszt direct with all his energies, the case would have been the same. . . .

"At the conclusion of the overture the trombones made a truly barbarous tumult. The whole first act fell powerless, even the phrases, which elsewhere have excited some attention in the public, were received with indifference;—and indeed, the more select and tasteful were the costumes and decorations, the more the music was obscured. The most injurious agent in the matter was the orchestra. The Berlin orchestra, that glorious body of tone, is evidently the greatest enemy that Wagner has; for while it does as it should and must, it one by one annihilates his splendid inspirations. Of the chorus of the guests at Wartburg, for instance, there was nothing to be heard but here and there a tone, and yet the chorus was more than a hundred persons strong. So too for a minute at a time you would see the open mouth of Johanna Wagner (Elizabeth), but whoever heard her strong voice must have been blessed

with better ears than your poor correspondent and many fellow sufferers. Whoever thinks it must have sounded more splendidly here than elsewhere in the orchestra, is much mistaken; only the beautiful is capable of being made more beautiful through superior means, and not the overwrought and trivial. To the superior means you must add the superior public; both united yield a result which will greatly damage the new tendency. Berlin does not waver to and fro as easily as the Art-loving portion of a smaller Residenz or a provincial town. . . . The Elizabeth and the Venus found excellent representatives in Johanna Wagner and Herrenburger-Tuczeck; in the singers generally, and especially in Herr Formes as *Tannhäuser*, there was much room for criticism.

COLOGNE.—Among the larger vocal compositions recently produced was a "Requiem for Mignon," by R. Schumann, which was found excellent, but filled all with sadness at the thought of the composer's malady. Three of the greatest artists here have become deranged: Lenau, the poet, Schumann, the composer, and Rethel, the painter. . . . Marschner and his wife have been in Cologne; the former produced the overture to a *Märchen*, and the latter sang an original concert aria. . . . The Soirées for chamber music have commenced with excellent programmes. . . . The Männergesang-verein sang some new pieces at their first concert, including some quartets by Niels Gade, which, though finely rendered, were received coldly.

PARIS, Jan. 7.—Last week Tedesco appeared for the first time as Fides in the *Prophète*, and was received with "storms of sincere applause;" it is said she compares well in this part with her predecessors, Albani and Mme. Stolz. . . . The Opera Comique expects a new work from Auber, who is confined to his chamber, having had his foot crushed under the hoof of a dragoon's horse. He enjoys the visits of Rossini, who is living very quiet and retired. . . . At the Théâtre Lyrique Mme. Pouilly succeeds Mme. Cabel, and made her debut as *Jaguarita*. . . . It is thought that Halevy will soon succeed Auber as director of the Conservatoire.

During the past year there have been produced in Paris not less than 295 new dramatic works. The Grand Opera has given three new operas and one ballet; the Théâtre Français seven comedies and two dramas; the Opera Comique nine comic operas; the Odeon one tragedy, ten farces and two dramas; the Italian Opera three works; the Théâtre Lyrique nine; &c., &c. Alas! the list of deaths is as great as that of births. The cradle was the coffin to most of these works!

MUNICH.—During the past year, *Tannhäuser* has been played ten times, often at advanced prices; Nicolai's "Merry Wives" seven times, and the *Prophète* six times. The number of new pieces was thirty. . . . A scholar of Liszt, named Pruckner, is creating an excitement by his fine playing.

WEIMAR.—*Don Juan* was announced for the 100th anniversary of Mozart's birth, for the first time with the original recitatives. . . . Berlioz is expected on the 8th of February, to conduct, as in former years, the concert of the Orchestral Pension Fund, and bring out his entire *Faust* in four parts. Also his *Benvenuto Cellini*, revised, will be produced at a festival on the 16th.

DRESDEN.—Among the new works produced here has been "The Goldsmith of Ulm," a romantic popular ballad, with songs and choruses, text by Mosenthal, music by Marschner. The simplicity of the poetic treatment is praised. Of the music, several numbers, as the market chorus, the accompaniment to the dance of gnomes, &c., were highly successful,

while on the whole a want of characteristic melody was felt.

LEIPZIG.—Some time ago, at the theatre, Mozart's *Figaro* was given with more than usual success. Mlle. Neubold, as Cherubino, obtained great applause. She is becoming a favorite with the public, which she well deserves, since, every time she appears, a marked improvement is visible both in her singing and acting. The house was but scantily attended, although *Figaro* has not been given for some years. On the 3rd ult., Madame Schumann (Clara Wieck) and Herr Joachim gave a *soirée* at the Gewandhaus, and fully justified their high artistic reputations. The first of the annual quartet *soirées* came off on the 8th ult. Madame Schumann performed Beethoven's grand sonata in B flat, Op 106, with wonderful success. On the 13th ult., the Gewandhaus programme embraced—

PART I.—Overture, *King Stephen*, Beethoven; Aria, *I Montecchi*, Mlle. Parisotti, from Rome; Concerto violin, Vieuxtemps, performed by Concertmeister Dreyschock; Canzonetten, with pianoforte accompaniment, sung by Mlle. Parisotti, Wichmann. PART II.—Overture, *Die Hebriden*, Mendelssohn; Duetto, *Semiramide*, M. Eilers and Mlle. Parisotti; Symphony (No. 3), C minor, Spohr.

Mlle. Parisotti, from Rome, appeared for the first time, but she did not make any impression. She still has much to learn before she can be fit to sing at public concerts. Herr Dreyschock was loudly applauded in the concerto by Vieuxtemps, and the orchestra was as usual, excellent. At the eighth concert Madame Schumann performed one of her husband's latest productions—*Introduction and Allegro Appassionato*—concertstück for piano with orchestra. She also played Beethoven's E flat concerto. This lady is the favorite of the Leipzig connoisseurs. She was heartily welcomed, and her performances elicited the most extravagant applause.

The rest of the eighth concert comprised the overture to *Oberon*; aria from *Figaro*, sung by Madame von Holdorp; duetto from ditto, by the same, with Herr A. Eilers; and Schumann's C major (No 2) symphony. Madame Holdorp possesses no particular merit as a singer, which was proved by the unsatisfactory manner in which she sang the aria. The orchestra again left nothing to be desired.

The king's birthday was celebrated at the Conservatoire on the 7th inst. The hall was crowded, and some of the pupils performed various *morceaux* from classical composers.

On the same day the theatre was illuminated, and Weber's *Jubel* overture was played by the band. Mlle. Franke, representing Saxonia, before the commencement of the play, came forward and recited a prologue, written by Theodor Apel for the occasion. The play given was, *Ein Deutscher Krieger*; or, a *German Warrior*. Mendelssohn's *Antigone* has been brought out at the theatre with great success. *Linda di Chamouni* has also been given.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, FEB. 9, 1856.

### Last Orchestral Concert.

The sixth and last concert proved a worthy and successful tribute to the memories of the two musicians, MOZART and MENDELSSOHN, whose birthday anniversaries occurring in the week suggested a programme made up wholly of their compositions. The audience, which had steadily increased with every concert, far outnumbered all its predecessors; and there was an interest, a profound attention, an enthusiasm from the beginning to the end, such as we have not witnessed in any concert of the winter. All seemed to enter into the spirit of the occasion. Upon the front of the stage stood the wreathed busts of the two composers, and the whole place and assemblage wore a festal aspect.

The selection of pieces contained nothing that was not excellent and of enduring interest, nothing trivial or flashy, and nothing on the other hand that could be found heavy or *de trop*. Necessarily the choice was limited to a very few works of each, but those were truly representative creations, particularly in the case of Mozart. In the great Symphony in C (which it was an English notion, before BEETHOVEN, to call "Jupiter," or king of symphonies), especially in its last movement with the fourfold fugue,—and in the

*Zauberflöte* overture (his last secular composition, written but a few months before his death in 1791), Mozart has bequeathed as it were the last result and perfect flower of his consummate learning and musicianship as well as of his spontaneous and poetic genius. These works, now a century since their author's birth, and more than half a century since their composition, pass as perfect in their kind,—and it is a kind in which dwells the essence of nearly all that was great in all kinds up to his time and since. (We mean, speaking of music as an art; of course there have been creations since these, and indeed creations of his own, embodying a deeper and a greater spiritual experience.) The performance of the Symphony was the purest achievement of our orchestra thus far; indeed it was by all odds the best performance which that Symphony has ever yet enjoyed in Boston. All was clear, well balanced and well blended; the outline of the whole and of each intermingling motive and each accessory phrase nicely preserved, as well as the luscious wealth and warmth of coloring from the reeds and brass, which have to take an equal share, according to Mozart's wont, in the most intellectual conversation. This was surely no small thing to do in that last movement; we have never seen an audience so attentive and so interested in a piece so extremely complex. But when it is so well played, the simple, appreciable beauty of the result is equal to the complexity of the means. The chemistry is forgotten in the beauty of the rose. There is a joyous geniality, too, predominating in this symphony, a real *Don Giovanni*-like tone of abandon and festivity in the bold opening and the end, as well as in the happy Minuet and Trio, which puts an audience in the best humor. The Andante Cantabile alternates from grand to lovely, and reveals the human and the superhuman, the tenderness and the superstitious awe as of one standing on the brink of the Infinite, the "night-side," as it has been called, of his nature.

Between this and the overture, the duet: *Cruel, perché*, from the *Nozze di Figaro*, sung very pleasingly by Mrs. LONG and Mr. WETHERBEE, formed an agreeable relief. If any thought the lady's part lacked feeling, they must remember the situation of the parties: the Count is serious, Susanna, gay at heart, pretending to be so.

The *Zauberflöte* overture was on the whole played as effectively as we have ever heard it, though not in all points as nicely as by the smaller Germania orchestra. The very quick time, combined with the *forzando* in the little fugue theme, made it impossible (we have always found it so more or less) to catch that little turn of four notes; the sharpest ear could not resolve the nebula into more than three or even two stars; the *forzando* was too rude, jerking away your attention from all else. With this usual exception, the overture came out splendidly; we do not remember to have heard the brass (trombones) so reinforced before, but they made music and not noise. Thus ended the first part with a pretty vividly refreshed and edifying sense of what we owe to MOZART.

The selections from MENDELSSOHN, if less complete, were characteristic and beautiful and various. The *Capriccio Brillant*, in B minor, has been pronounced the most difficult of all his works for piano and orchestra to render effectively. It opens with a beautiful and pensive

Andante, in broad arpeggio chords, and soon passes into a quick, nervous, delicate Rondo Allegro, much in the same vein with the finale to the G minor Concerto. In subjects, treatment, harmony, instrumentation it is thoroughly Mendelssohnian, full of his melancholy tenderness, yet fiery persistency. Mr. J. C. D. PARKER has hardly the strength for a great Music Hall performance; a chamber concert is much more his element; yet he played it with taste and feeling, in parts with delicacy and distinctness, while in others, particularly the rapid florid passages, the outline seemed a little confused; nervousness and the vast place might account for that, however. The effort was conceived in an artistic spirit, and was generally and warmly applauded.

In the vocal part Mendelssohn was represented in one of his greatest moments, much more than Mozart had been. The great air from "Elijah": *Hear ye Israel*, with what follows, is about as beautiful and grand a thing as he has written for the singer, and JENNY LIND preëminently was that singer. Who that remembers the celestial purity and tenderness of her voice in that exquisite melody, and the sublime declamation, as of a voice of good cheer from above, of the sentence: *Thus, thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid!* can expect to be so inspired by mortal song many times in one little life? To expect the same excellence from one of our own singers, who has had only the opportunities of culture which this place affords, were quite unreasonable. Yet to Mrs. LONG we feel indebted for great pleasure in that song. The first melody she sang sweetly, and she threw a good deal of force and abandon into the last; her high tones, as always, were clear and telling; her rendering conscientious; but it lacked more inspiration, more refinement and coloring as it were of tone, especially in those emphatic high tones, which were somewhat hard and crude, when they should have shone with a fine star-like purity in the clear heights of song. Compared with almost any of our usual oratorio solos, the rendering was superior.

No American audience is yet musical to the degree that it will bear two whole Symphonies on the same evening; accordingly Mendelssohn in this great form, in which he has written at least two master-works, (three, if we count the Symphony Cantata: "Song of Praise,"—and why not, as much almost as Beethoven's "Choral?") was represented by the two most interesting movements from his "Italian" Symphony, in A major, the "Scotch" symphony, in A minor, having already figured in the second concert of this series. The sombre, meditative Andante, with the wind instruments intoning a melancholy hymn-like tune, or dirge, while the strings keep up a running *staccato* accompaniment, with solemn tread of basses, is quite impressive, and really gives the idea of one moving amid the twilight glories of the past, in some silent old cathedral, as it were. It was finely rendered by the orchestra; and so was the wild, delirious Saltarello, the Italian dance, passing anon into the complete abandon of the Tarentella, which the tone-poet reproduces as they might haunt his brain in exquisite, sad, feverish dreams.

The "Wedding March" recalled the music most peculiarly his own, that of the "Midsummer Night's Dream," and made a popular and enlivening finale to an unusually choice and well-relished feast of harmony.

We have yet to cast a glance back over this important series of concerts, too soon closed, and read the lesson which they yield us with regard to our orchestral, or let us rather say, Symphony concerts in the future. Meanwhile the next great event to which we all look forward is the Beethoven Festival upon the first of March. With that in prospect the spirit of such things cannot die out.

#### Italian Opera.—Third Week.

At length we have had a good performance of *Don Giovanni* in Boston. We say a good performance, since there was no part bad,—a thing which could not be said of any previous performance which we have ever witnessed, of this best of all the operas. In the first days of it in Boston, TRUFFI made a Donna Anna pleasant to remember, but BENEVENTANO was a coarse, loud blustering Don, not half so gentlemanly as his knave, the Leporello of SANQUIRICO; and FORTI for his Ottavio merited the fate he found in Mexico (if Maretzek's book be true); BOSIO was the ideal perfection of Zerlina, but none of her companions does one care to recall; insignificant or shocking some of them. SONTAG was a good Zerlina, too, but the Donna Anna was naught. GRISI was a noble, a superb Anna, and MARIO's *Il mio tesoro* divine, but BADIALI made a clumsy Don; and for the rest, the less said the better. This time we had no Grisi, no Bosio, no Mario; but of the eight important parts, all found fair representatives, and the performance, as a whole, whatever might be thought of it in Germany, was far more satisfactory than any ever given here before.

Sig. MORELLI was of course far enough from realizing Mozart's ideal of the splendid roué; but he came much nearer to it than any we have seen upon our stage before; much nearer than Badiali, not only in the fact that he looked and acted it better, handsomer, younger, sprightlier, with some courtly ease and dignity of manner, as well as with something of that insinuating address, which is supposed to have broken so many hearts; but also that he sang it better. BADIALI's baritone was too ponderous, not equal to the subtle, intellectual grace of the music, which Morelli rendered with artistic understanding, and very effectively. For the first time we heard the champagne song: *Fin ch'an del vino*, dashed off with the true spirit, and not overdone. He sang the serenade, too, finely, and in the tremendous last scene, with the ghost, his defiant *Parla, parla, ascoltando qui sto*, rang out richly and musically enough. Sig. ROVERE is a true Italian *buffo*, perhaps the best specimen of that type that we have had, and possibly for German ideas, his Leporello humor may have seemed too broad. We must say we enjoyed this Leporello more than any of his predecessors, however. He acted finely in the first scene, and, indeed, throughout, never losing an opportunity, and true always to his part. He has a good bass voice and sings well; but sometimes with him the drollery is at the expense of the music—that music which is so fine in itself, that the ear is avaricious of each note of it, and would not have one pushed aside by the laughs and extra admiration points of the funniest actor in the world. Herr MUELLER, like a loyal German subject of Mozart, was quite at home and faithful in the part of the Commendatore. He has a round and telling bass, and used



it discreetly. In the first scene, where the old man falls under the sword of Don Juan, he acted well, and for the first time in our recollection that wonderful trio of bass voices was sung distinctly and effectively. Herr Müller was not "made up" well for the statue; that dull, grey, leaden color poorly answered for the white man of marble; but his solid, marble tones told most impressively in the scene where he claims the culprit; he wants, however, a few stronger sub-bass tones.

Having begun with the men, let us finish. SIG. SALVIANI justified the good impression we received of him, in the ungracious part of Pollio. As a singer, he is far from being a MARIO or a SALVI; his *Il mio tesoro* was infinitely short of Mario's, yet he sang it by no means badly; he shows himself the artist throughout in his singing; his voice is rich, manly, of good volume, and his method sound; he is plainly past his prime, however, and has to husband his power carefully; accordingly, a good *sostenuto* is the chief desideratum in his singing; he touches the note with certainty and leaves no doubt of its intention, but lets it vanish away instantly; he seems to make a virtue of necessity in rendering so many passages *staccato*; these are literally his short-comings. Take it throughout, we have scarcely had so unexceptionable an Ottavio. He helped to make the first scene, with Donna Anna over the dead body of her father, unusually effective; we lost less than usual of the wondrous beauty of the music in that hurried scene. And it was no small gain to the general effect to have for once the part of Masetto filled by a singer of such positive power as Sig. GASPARNI. His fine large bass voice and his hearty way of entering into the spirit of his part and of the whole play, went far to place what has hitherto been a cypher on the telling side. How often it happens that truth and excellence in some modest accessory adds incalculably to the effect of a whole!

With five good male parts, three distinguished prime donne made the *personnel* uncommonly complete. Mme. DE LA GRANGE was really an admirable Donna Anna; she only lacked the natural warmth of voice and the larger style of beauty of GRISI, to equal her in some parts. To give all its majesty and loftiness of passion, for instance, to the great recitative and aria: *Or sai chi l'onore*, she must make more effort than is consistent with the (not the less impassioned) repose of high Art, just as in her Norma and Lucrezia. But she conceives it perfectly, and both her action and her singing were a masterpiece to be remembered. Her first scene, over her dead father, could not be much better. The air above-named was splendidly sung. She made the Donna Anna a great part, and made its high spiritual tone rule throughout the play, which many audiences have failed to recognize before; and what contributed not a little to this result was her not omitting (as all our Donna Annas have before) the great air: *Non mi dir*, which was never before sung here except by JENNY LIND once or twice in concerts. Why this song was announced as "The Letter," we know not. It is properly addressed to her lover, supposed to be present in person and urging the fulfilment of their union; she, poor lady, feeling that her life is for another world, tenderly, religiously resists his importunity. But inasmuch as it would be awkward and too much even for Ottavio's

patience, to stay upon the stage merely as listener to this long song, it seemed not a bad device that she should hold a letter in her hand to justify its introduction in his absence. Mme. Lagrange sang it almost to perfection; it closes with a very high and somewhat bravura passage, suited to her best power; and if her voice in the simple *cantabile* parts is hardly so rich or sympathetic as we could wish, we forget it almost in the admirable good taste and finish of her art. In Mme. LAGRANGE you always feel that the use is greater than the material used; and that marks the artist. Continually she seems rather to pursue a voice than to possess it. Ideally she has it, substantially it is wanting, except just enough to indicate by purest outlines what it fain would be. The effort, however, succeeds at some sacrifice, and leads into what is the only real fault in her singing, that of an habitual tremolo or shakiness of voice in the strong passages.

For the first time, also, we have had a good Elvira. Miss HENSLEY looked, acted, sang the part with more truth and refinement than any who have attempted it before. She is the first Elvira who has conducted herself sensibly upon the stage here during the impertinence of Leporello's "Catalogue Song," repulsing and turning from him, as if absorbed in her own griefs. She sang all the music sweetly, tastefully, expressively, and only wanted more power of voice to compete with other voices, and a too loud orchestra, in the Trio, and the serenade, and supper scenes.

DIDIEE made a charmingly pretty and coquettish Zerlina; her native French vivacity and roguishness gave the part a somewhat different coloring from Bosio's; but it was almost as perfect in its way. She sang the music beautifully, especially the song *Vedrai Carino*, in which her exceedingly rich mezzo soprano tones came admirably in play. Didiée's mezzo soprano plainly is her natural voice, and one of the very richest and most musical we have ever heard; her lowest contralto register, which she uses in such rôles as Pierotto, and Orsini, and Azucena, is the artificial part. Compared with the husky, mannish low tones of most of the strong contraltos who have been here—all perhaps except Alboni's—her's seemed round and musical at first; but this beauty does not grow upon us. In Zerlina there was no such exception to the rare beauty of her organ, and she won, next to Lagrange, the best share of the honors of the evening.

With such singers the concerted pieces all went better than usual; especially that wonderful quartet, and the trio of maskers, which we never heard so well sung the first time, and it was still better in the repetition. The famous Sestet, too, came out more symmetrically and intelligibly than heretofore. The chief wants were of scenery and outward accessories. The lamest part of all was the finale of the first act, the ball scene, owing to the want of dancers, and the music was curtailed somewhat. The unsurprisingly rich and genial instrumentation was well rendered in most parts, yet in some parts there was carelessness, and too little sympathetic deference to the voice. But at once delicious and wierd music of the graveyard scene, and the terribly sublime finale, were remarkably well done.

The audience in numbers and enthusiasm was worthy of this fine performance; it was by far the largest and the most enthusiastic audience of the season, and leaves no excuse for repeating inferior works in preference to *Don Giovanni*.

We have begun with the most important, with the highest moment. We must go back a little. Since our last review, *La Favorita*, *Linda* (for the second time), and *Lucrezia Borgia* have been

performed. We were only able to be present at the last. The performance is chiefly memorable for LAGRANGE's Borgia and DIDIEE's Orsini. Both impersonations were of a very high order; that of Lagrange intrinsically the greatest, that of Didiée most popular, because the multitude love strong, low tones, and a voice generally of so much positive musical substance as Didiée's, and because the character is a picturesque one, and she looked and acted it so gracefully and cavalierly. She sang the drinking song wonderfully well, and was obliged to sing the first verse three times over. No one ever sang Lucrezia here so transcendently as Lagrange. Sig. BRIGNOLI sang the music of Gennaro very sweetly, but too feebly for the usual effect of the great trio, which suffered also from the dry and lifeless baritone of Signor CASPIANI; whose voice however is above the average in power and quality, and who sings correctly, but makes a very stiff and mechanical duke Alfonso. GASPARNI's strong voice did excellent service in the important and secondary rôle of Gabetta, and the orchestra and chorus made the ensembles as effective as ever.

Next week we shall have to speak of the long promised *Prophète*. This afternoon, *Semiramide* again. One more extra week will prolong the ecstasy of the devoted opera-goers, for which the programme will be found below.

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BENEFIT of Mlle. NANTIER DIDIEE!

This (Saturday) Afternoon, Feb. 9th,

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MONDAY, Feb. 11.....IL TROVATORE.

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WEDNESDAY, Feb. 13.....THE PROPHET.

Benefit of Madame ANNA DE LA GRANGE.

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In behalf of the Committee,  
CHARLES C. PERKINS, Chairman.

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